



Likkutei Sichos

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Whose Cake is This?

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1.

THE KOHEN GADOL'S OBLIGATION

This week's *parshah*¹ discusses the law of the “*kohen gadol*'s pan-offering”² — that every day (“continually”), the *kohen gadol* must bring (“from his home,” i.e., from his property)³ a *minchah* sacrifice,⁴ “Half of it in the morning, and half in the afternoon.”

In a case where “the *kohen gadol* died,” and “they did not appoint another in his place,” the law is the subject of dispute between *Tannaim*:⁵ “From whose property would it (the *kohen gadol*'s pan-offering) be offered?”⁶ Rabbi Shimon maintains “from the community” — it is brought from communal funds. Rabbi Yehudah maintains “from the heirs” — until such time that another *kohen gadol* is appointed, the heirs of the *kohen gadol* offer the *minchah*.⁷

To clarify the basis of this dispute, the Gemara⁸ cites a *beraisa*: Rabbi Yehudah expounds the verse,⁹ “*The kohen who is anointed¹⁰ in his place, from among his sons shall perform it* — this verse implies that when the anointed *kohen* dies, one of his sons should perform it in his place.”¹¹ In contrast, Rabbi Shimon expounds the {continuation of the} verse,¹² “*It is an eternal {עולם} decree from Hashem* — implying from the {עולם} world.” (Rashi elaborates: “from the community, i.e., from the *Terumas Halishkah*.”)¹³

¹ *Vayikra* 6:13.

² {In the original Hebrew, “*chavitei kohen gadol*”; lit. “the griddle-cake (offering) of the *kohen gadol*.”}

³ *Menachos* 50b; *Toras Kohanim*, *Tzav* 6:13; *Tosefta*, *Menachos*, ch. 7, par. 5.

⁴ {Meal-offering.}

⁵ {The Sages of the Mishnah.}

⁶ *Menachos* 51b (mishnah); *Toras Kohanim*, *Tzav* 6:15; *Tosefta*, *Menachos*, ch. 7, par. 6; see *Yerushalmi*, “*Shekalim*,” ch. 7, par. 3.

⁷ See *Menachos*, *ibid.*, Rashi s.v. “*haKohen*.”

⁸ *Menachos* 51b.

⁹ *Vayikra* 6:15.

¹⁰ {To become the *kohen gadol*, a *kohen* first had to be anointed. Hence, a *kohen gadol* is also called *kohen ha'mashiach*, the anointed *kohen*. For example, see *Vayikra* 21:10.}

¹¹ Wording of *Chidushei HaRashba*, *Menachos* 51b.

¹² *Vayikra* 6:15.

¹³ {Communal funds.}

The wording of the mishnah, “From whose property would it be offered,” and similarly, the wording of both *Tannaim* in their dialogue, imply that the (biblical)¹⁴ obligation for the offering in a situation that “they did not appoint another in his place” is not an entirely different obligation (than the pan-offering offered by the *kohen gadol* himself). This understanding means that the Torah introduces **another** obligation about bringing the pan-offering (when the *kohen gadol* dies) – only this obligation is a continuation and part of the same category as the obligatory offering of the *kohen gadol* himself.

On this basis, we can posit that the dispute on interpreting the verses is linked with another dispute regarding the **rationale** of the *kohen gadol*’s pan-offering (even) when offered by the *kohen gadol* himself.

2.

INDIVIDUAL OR COMMUNAL

Concerning the classification of “the *kohen gadol*’s pan-offering” (despite being brought from his property and ascribed to him, “the ***kohen gadol***’s pan-offering”),¹⁵ we need to ascertain whether the pan-offering was wholly considered an individual’s sacrifice, or whether it was analogous to a communal sacrifice.

We can posit that this is connected with the rationale behind the sacrifice:

*Sefer HaChinuch*¹⁶ clarifies:

The root of the mitzvah — since the *kohen gadol* serves as the emissary of the Jewish people to their Father in Heaven, meaning, the *kohen gadol* prays to Him on their behalf. The Jewish people are granted atonement through his prayers and sacrifices, so it is fitting that such an individual have a sacrifice designated for him continually,

¹⁴ See *Menachos* 51b towards the end of the page.

¹⁵ The term used in many places — see *Mishnah, Menachos* 50b; *Mishneh Torah, “Hilchos Temidin U’Musafin,”* ch. 3, par. 18, et al.

¹⁶ *Sefer Hachinuch*, mitzvah 136.

similar to the communal sacrifice of the *tamid*....¹⁷ And on account of this, the *kohen gadol*'s service will be effective for himself and the Jewish people.

In light of this clarification, we can infer that the *kohen gadol*'s (continual) pan-offering was for the sake of **the community's** atonement, **similar to** the communal *tamid* sacrifice. This is especially evident, as the *kohen gadol*'s pan-offering was sacrificed along with the *tamid* sacrifice.¹⁸

However, it is implied and understood that many commentators understand the sacrifice as being (merely) connected to the *kohen gadol* **himself** (as an individual). This understanding is derived from many of the reasons {for this mitzvah} provided by the commentators that elucidate the rationales behind the mitzvos.

[As an example — the *Abarbanel*¹⁹ cites many reasons, among them: “To enter before Hashem with humility and symbols of poverty, to resemble a pauper and a destitute person who stands before the Master of the entire universe”;²⁰ “Hashem desired that, every day, an individual and a communal sacrifice should be offered before Him... in an all-inclusive way and in a specific way....”]²¹

On this basis, we can posit that the dispute mentioned above (about a *kohen gadol* who died and “they did not appoint another in his place; from whose property would it be offered?”) hinges upon the two rationales discussed above:

If we assume that the *kohen gadol*'s sacrifice is similar to a communal sacrifice, it must be that when there is no *kohen gadol* to bring the sacrifice, the community themselves must bring it. Meaning, it comes from the community's property.

¹⁷ {“*Tamid*,” lit., “continual”— the twice-daily communal sacrifice.}

¹⁸ *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Temidin U'Musafin*, ch. 3, par. 18.

¹⁹ *Abarbanel* on *Vayikra* 6:13.

²⁰ Reason 5.

²¹ Reason 9.

Conversely, if we assume that a *kohen gadol's sacrifice is not linked with the community but with the kohen gadol as an individual, then (in the case that a kohen gadol died) the sacrifice should be brought by the kohen gadol's heirs.*

3.

THE KOHEN GADOL'S ATONEMENT

Based on the discussion above — that, according to Rabbi Yehudah, the *kohen gadol's* heirs must bring the offering since the sacrifice is related to the *kohen gadol* himself — Rambam's diction in the halachah mentioned above can be better appreciated:

Rambam²² rules:

If a *kohen gadol* died in the morning after offering half of an *isaron*²³ and another *kohen* was not appointed, the heirs {of the deceased *kohen gadol*} should bring an entire *isaron* as **atonement for him**.

This concluding phrase is puzzling: What is the significance of this additional phrase that the heirs offer the sacrifice “as atonement for him”? And from where does Rambam infer this?

The explanation: With this addition, Rambam wants to clarify why the law stipulates that “the heirs should bring....” In doing so, he also clarifies another point, as follows: Seemingly, since Rabbi Yehudah **deviates** from the wording of the verse²⁴ — “**from among his sons**, shall perform it.” Instead, he says, “**heirs**” — which does not mean specifically male heirs —

(who are qualified candidates to bring the pan-offering: Needless to say, this would be the case not only when one of the sons was qualified to replace their father [and thus, already is **potentially**] and will later actually become the

²² *Mishneh Torah, “Hilchos Temidin U’Musafin,”* ch. 3, par. 22.

²³ {A volumetric measurement; the *kohen gadol* offered half an *isaron* each morning, and half an *isaron* each evening.}

²⁴ {*Vayikra* 6:15.}

kohen gadol, but even when none of the sons are qualified successors and they are [and will remain] ordinary *kohanim*, still, since they brought a pan-offering on the day they were inaugurated into the priesthood, any son may bring the pan-offering in place of their deceased father}).

Rather, {with his nuanced wording, Rabbi Yehudah intimates that} even if the *kohen gadol* only heirs were **daughters** — **they** must bring the pan-offering.

We need to probe further: What is the source of Rabbi Yehudah’s novel idea that even **these** heirs (without qualification — also daughters) must offer the sacrifice, not only “his sons” (as stated in the verse)?

Rambam answers that the sacrifice (is not essentially from, or on behalf of, the heirs themselves but) is brought “as **atonement for him** {i.e., the deceased *kohen gadol*}.” The heirs bring the sacrifice as atonement for the **testator** (since the pan-offering obtains atonement for the *kohen gadol*). The sacrifice is not classified as **their** sacrifice. Instead, it is the sacrifice of the **testator**. They bring (as **heirs**) the “sacrifice of **their father**.”

4.

RASHI’S EXPLANATION

Based on the above explanation of the *kohen gadol*’s pan-offering — that it is classified as (being similar to) a communal offering and that it can also be to be an individual sacrifice (of the *kohen gadol*) — Rashi’s explanation of the verse,²⁵ “The *kohen* who is anointed in his place, from among his sons, shall perform it.... it shall be caused to go up in smoke in its entirety,” is also understood.

Rashi quotes, “Who is anointed in his place, from among his sons,” and comments:²⁶ “The anointed one, from among his sons, who is in his place.” Next,

²⁵ *Vayikra* 6:15.

²⁶ {Rashi on *Vayikra* 6:15.}

Rashi quotes, “It shall be caused to go up in smoke in its entirety,” and comments: “*Kemitzah*²⁷ is not performed for its remainder to be eaten. Rather, it is burned in its entirety.”

Rashi’s first note needs to be clarified (as the commentators point out):²⁸ By rearranging the order of the verse, what does Rashi mean to clarify? How does this alter or contribute to our understanding of the verse?

Rashi’s second note is also tricky: What **novel insight** does Rashi introduce? The simple meaning of “it shall be caused to go up in smoke **in its entirety**” has only one interpretation — that **it must be burnt entirely** (on top of the Altar), and nothing remains to be eaten?!

Moreover, Rashi had already used this expression earlier,²⁹ “I might think that... only apply to the *minchah* of an Israelite when *kemitzah* is performed. A *minchah* of a *kohen*, however, which is {burnt in its} **entirety**...” — and Rashi does **not add** any clarification. That is, the meaning of “entirety” is readily understood (that the sacrifice is burnt entirely) — so why does Rashi **here** clarify its meaning and provide a lengthy explanation: “*Kemitzah* is not performed for its remainder to be eaten. Rather, it is burned in its entirety”?

Later on, in his commentary of the following verse,³⁰ “Every *minchah* of a *kohen* is to be an entirety; it shall not be eaten,” Rashi clarifies the word, “an *entirety* — all of it is offered equally to the One who is On High.” This comment is highly perplexing: Rashi uses the word “entirety” previously without clarification; subsequently, he clarifies that it means, “*Kemitzah* is not performed...”; and only then does he translate the word “entirety”!

²⁷ {“*Kemitzah*” — A procedure performed with the *minchah* offering. The *kohen* uses his three middle fingers (according to some opinions, all five fingers) to scoop a portion from the *minchah* to be placed on the Altar.}

²⁸ *Re'em*; *Gur Aryeh*; *Sifsei Chachomim*; *Chidushei U'Pirushei Maharik*; et al.

²⁹ Rashi on *Vayikra* 6:7; see Rashi on *Vayikra* 5:13.

³⁰ *Vayikra* 6:16.

5.

CLARIFYING RASHI

The clarification of all this is as follows:

The question Rashi anticipates is the variance between the two verses: The first verse³¹ (which discusses the *minchah* of the anointed *kohen*) says, “**It shall be caused to go up in smoke** in its entirety.” In contrast, the second verse³² (which discusses “every *minchah* of a *kohen*”) says, “**Is to be** an entirety.”

From the variance, Rashi deduces two separate usages for “entirety.” This is emphasized in and clarified by Rashi’s lengthy explanation:

“*It shall be caused to go up in smoke in its entirety* — *kemitzah* is not performed for its remainder to be eaten. Rather, it is burned in its entirety.” With his lengthy language, Rashi’s intention is clear: The clause, “It shall be caused to go up in smoke in its entirety,” does not negate ***kemitzah*** since *kemitzah* must still be performed. However, the *kemitzah* is performed so that “its remainder was not eaten.” Instead, it is brought up in smoke upon the Altar³³ — “The *kometz* is sacrificed by itself, and the remainder is sacrificed by itself.”³⁴ This explains, “It shall be caused to go up in smoke in its entirety” — everything (both the *kometz* and the remainder) is brought up in smoke upon the Altar.

Rashi clarifies the second, “(Is to be an) entirety” — which is said regarding “every *minchah* of a *kohen*” — to mean that “all of it is offered **equally** to the One who is On High.” This *minchah* is never divided (into a *kometz* and the remainder), but it is offered **equally** to Hashem. In other words, no *kemitzah* was performed in the first place. “Is to be an entirety” — it remains **as it is**.

³¹ *Vayikra* 6:15.

³² *Vayikra* 6:16.

³³ *Maskil LeDavid* explains Rashi’s comments this way.

³⁴ *Menachos* 72b. (This is Rabbi Shimon’s opinion regarding the *minchah* offering of a sinner brought by one of the *kohanim*.)

6.

ESTABLISHING RASHI'S OPINION

What is the reason for the difference between the *kohen gadol's minchah* and the *minchah* of a regular *kohen*?

Based on what was discussed above (in Section 2), this is readily understood: Rashi takes the position (**according to the straightforward meaning** of the verse) that the *kohen gadol's* pan-offering brought every day **consistently** was not classified as a sacrifice of an individual (brought by the *kohen gadol* as an individual). (If this were the case, then the pan-offering would be in the same category as a regular *kohen's minchah*, with an additional attribute that the pan-offering was connected with the position of the *kohen gadol*.) Instead, the pan-offering was (a sacrifice that a *kohen gadol* brought as an emissary of the Jewish people) analogous to the **tamid** sacrifice, similar to a communal sacrifice.

This also clarifies why Rashi learns that the *kohen gadol's* pan-offering requires *kemitzah* — since he maintains that this pan-offering was **not** categorized as the *kohen's minchah*. Rather, it is similar to a **communal minchah**. Therefore, *kemitzah* must be performed with it like all other *minchah* offerings sacrificed on the Altar.³⁵ However, since, in practice, the *kohen gadol* sacrificed the *minchah*, it also shared a similar and comparative quality to the *kohen's minchah* in that its remainder was not eaten.³⁶

For this reason, Rashi also prefaces in his commentary at the beginning of the verse, “The *kohen* who is anointed in his place, from among his sons,” and (deviates and) clarifies,³⁷ “The anointed one, from among his sons who is in his place”:

³⁵ See *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Maaseh HaKarbanos*,” ch. 12, par. 3 ff.

³⁶ Unlike a communal *minchah* (the *omer minchah*) which was sacrificed on the Altar, whose remainder is eaten “like the remainder of all *minchah* offerings” (Rambam, “*Hilchos Temidin U’Musafin*,” ch. 7, par. 12).

³⁷ {Rashi on *Vayikra* 6:15.}

With this clarification, Rashi aims to negate (in the **straightforward meaning** of the verse) Rabbi Yehudah's explanation: Based on Rabbi Yehudah's explanation, the words "from among his sons" (and consequently also the words "in his place") are not linked with the word "anointed," but rather, with the words, "shall perform...." The explanation of the verse is (as was explained above): "The *kohen* who is anointed" (in a case that he died) "{one} from among his sons should perform it in his place" — his sons must bring the sacrifice of the *minchah* in his place.

[Although this explanation is seemingly far removed from the straightforward meaning of the verse, it would have been possible to say that the verse is in this order (instead of saying, "from among his sons, in his place," the verse says, "in his place, from among his sons") to allude to **another** law (**in addition** to the simple explanation of the verse that the incoming anointed *kohen* must bring the *kohen gadol's* pan-offering). Namely, if a *kohen gadol* dies, his sons are to bring his sacrifice, following Rabbi Yehudah's opinion.]³⁸

Rashi negates this understanding of the straightforward meaning of the verse. He teaches that it is as if the verse had said from the outset, "The anointed one, from among his sons who is in his stead" (with nothing between the words "anointed" and "from among his sons" — the **anointed** *kohen* who is "from among his sons"), but not referring to his ordinary sons. Since Rashi maintains, as was explained above, that the purpose of the *kohen gadol's* pan-offering was to secure atonement for the Jewish people, the *kohen gadol* brings it as an emissary of the Jewish people. Thus, it cannot be postulated (in the case a *kohen gadol* died) that his children (neither of whom is a *kohen gadol* nor the Jewish people's emissary) should bring the sacrifice.

³⁸ *Menachos* 51b.

“A STATUTE FOREVER”

Based on the discussion above where the difference between the opinions Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Shimon was identified as a dispute concerning the classification of the *minchah* pan-offering — even when the *kohen gadol* himself brings the *minchah* — another difference related to the pan-offering can be clarified:

The Gemara³⁹ asks: “What does Rabbi Yehudah do with the phrase, ‘It is a statute forever’? It teaches that the statute applies forever.”

*Tosafos*⁴⁰ clarifies: “I may have thought that Aharon would offer the pan-offering daily, but his sons would {only} offer them at the time they became *kohen gadol*, even though they were already inaugurated as ordinary *kohanim*.” (Therefore, we must be taught otherwise, “*That the statute applies forever* — that it is brought *daily*”).⁴¹ *Tosafos* then clarifies, “Rabbi Shimon does not agree with this reasoning.”

At first glance, this is perplexing: What are they arguing about? Is it self-understood that the pan-offering must be sacrificed *daily* (including the subsequent generations) or if a special exposition is required?

This is clarified based on the above: The **continual** services in the Temple are connected to the community since a community is a **continual** and everlasting entity, similar to the law that a community never dies.⁴² Therefore, according to Rabbi Shimon, who maintains that the *kohen gadol*’s pan-offering resembles a communal sacrifice, there is no need for a special inference to establish that the commandment, “A **continual** *minchah* offering” (also) applies to future generations, it is similar to the *tamid* sacrifice offered daily.

³⁹ *Menachos* 51b.

⁴⁰ *Tosafos* on *Menachos* 51b, s.v., “*chok*.”

⁴¹ Wording of Rabbeinu Gershom, *Menachos* 51b.

⁴² See *Horiyos* 6a; see *Mefaneyach Tzefunos*, ch. 1, par. 11 and 13.

Rabbi Yehudah maintains, however, that the *minchah* is an individual's sacrifice, the sacrifice of the *kohen gadol* himself, and an individual's sacrifice is generally not brought "continually" daily. Therefore, an exposition must establish that regarding the commandment to offer **this** individual sacrifice, "the statute applies forever — it is brought daily."

8.

A CONTINUAL MINCHAH

On this basis, we can posit that the difference is not merely whether a special exposition is necessary. Instead, the difference also relates to the nature of the sacrifice's continuity and its defining parameters: We can posit that the nature of the community's continual obligations is not that every day generates **another** (new) obligation. Rather, there is **a single**, ongoing, continuous obligation. This characteristic is analogous to that of the community. As discussed above, it is a single entity (continually and constantly).

The same is true about a *kohen gadol's* pan-offering: If we maintain that the pan-offering is similar to a communal offering, a *kohen gadol's* sacrificial obligation would be (in a manner of "a **continual minchah** offering") **a single** continual obligation, incumbent on him since **the day** he was anointed and inaugurated for *avodah*⁴³ (to offer them **every** day), **similar** to the obligation of the communal *tamid* sacrifice.

However, suppose we maintain that a *kohen gadol's* pan-offering is the offering of an individual since an individual does share **the** attribute of continuity (as the community — which "never dies"). In that case, we must say that the obligation to bring "a **continual minchah** offering" means that every day, a *kohen gadol* has a new (distinct) obligation to bring a pan-offering.

⁴³ {Temple service.}

On this basis, the exposition of *Toras Kohanim* on the verse, “This is the offering of Aharon..., on the day he is inaugurated..., as a continual *minchah* offering,” is also clarified. These are the words of the *Toras Kohanim*:

From the day he is inaugurated, he brings a tenth of an *ephah*⁴⁴ forever. Or does the verse say that he brings a tenth of an *ephah* (only) on the day he is inaugurated and then ceases to bring it? The verse says, “A continual *minchah* offering.” How, then, do I fulfill the clause, “On the day he is inaugurated”? On the day he is inaugurated, he brings a tenth of an *ephah* {and this continues} *forever*.

This requires clarification: How does *Toras Kohanim* answer his question by explaining the words “on the day he is inaugurated” to mean, “on the day he is inaugurated, he brings... forever”? If the verse merely said, “A continual *minchah* offering,” we would have also known that the sacrifice must always be offered from the day he becomes a *kohen gadol* (“on the day he is inaugurated”)!

Based on the above, we can posit that *Toras Kohanim* establishes that every day, “forever,” is “**the day he is inaugurated**” — “The day he is inaugurated” **itself continues**. This helps clarify the classification of “a continual *minchah* offering” — the continuity is emphasized by the obligation to offer the *minchah* sacrifice daily as if it were “the day he is inaugurated.”

We can posit that this idea also holds practical halachic relevance: Following **this** understanding regarding the classification of “a continual *minchah* offering,” the *kohen gadol*’s pan-offering sacrificed daily is categorized as an **inaugural** *minchah* offering (“on the day he is inaugurated”). Thus, it can be said that just as a *kohen gadol* may not initially partake in the Temple service before offering his inaugural *minchah* offering,⁴⁵ the same applies every day. The *kohen gadol* may not (at least initially) participate in any Temple service before he brings the pan-offering.

⁴⁴ {A volumetric measure.}

⁴⁵ *Menachos* 51b; *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Klei Hamikdash*,” ch. 5, par. 16.

9.

THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHAH

The explanation above regarding how “a continual *minchah* offering” is classified (based on the understanding that the pan-offering was the sacrifice of an individual) — that the clause “on the day he was inaugurated” is a recurring dynamic, and every day brings a renewed obligation to offer the inaugural sacrifices —

is consistent with the exposition found in *Likkutei Torah*⁴⁶ — the “*Chassidisher parshah*”⁴⁷ — on this week’s *parshah*: The Alter Rebbe raises a question about the wording of the verse, “*On the day he was inaugurated.*” He asks, “Seemingly, the verse should have said, ‘From the day he was inaugurated,’ considering that subsequently it says, ‘a continual *minchah* offering?’” He answers: “So that as a result, every day, forever, there will be a revelation of the spiritual quality and level linked to ‘the day he was inaugurated.’” The Alter Rebbe clarifies that this is the deeper meaning of what is said “regarding Aharon’s sacrifice ‘a continual *minchah* offering.’ In other words, it is forever; nevertheless, it possesses the quality intimated by the phrase, ‘on the day he was inaugurated.’”

This explanation dovetails with the one given above from the perspective of the revealed dimension of the Torah — every single day possesses the attribute underlying “the day he was inaugurated.”

— From a talk delivered on Shabbos *parshas Tzav*, 5726 (1966), and Motzei Shabbos *parshas Tzav*, 5738 (1978)

⁴⁶ *Likkutei Torah, Tzav*, 8b.

⁴⁷ {A reference to the Chassidic discourses in *Torah Or* and *Likkutei Torah* on the *parshah* of the week.}